

Biden says Putin "cannot remain in power" during speech in Poland



President Joe Biden said during a speech in Poland on Saturday that Russian President Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power." But moments later, the White House appeared to walk back his comment, with an official saying he wasn't talking about regime change.

"The President's point was that Putin cannot be allowed to exercise power over his neighbors or the region," a White House official said. "He was not discussing Putin's power in Russia, or regime change."

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ry Peskov said, "It's  
to decide who will

eskov added. "And of

course it is unbecoming for the president of the U.S. to make such statements."

Mr. Biden made the remark about the Russian president at the tail end of his speech, which he gave at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. He also condemned Putin's war in Ukraine, while sympathizing with the Ukrainian people who have had their homeland

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and the era of the Soviet Union. "But the battle for democracy could not and did not conclude with the end of the Cold War," he said.

He said Russia has "strangled democracy" both in Ukraine and at home. Mr. Biden accused Putin of using "disinformation" and "brute force" in Russia to squash resistance to the war and to cut the Russian people off from the rest of the world, and the truth.

Speaking directly to the Russian people, whom he said are not the enemy, Mr. Biden said: "I am telling you the truth: this war is not worthy of you, the Russian people."

Meanwhile, he applauded the Ukrainian people for standing up to Russian forces, and sympathized with Ukrainian refugees. Earlier on Saturday, Mr. Biden met with refugees in Poland. He said one little girl asked him whether she would see her brother and dad, who were still in Ukraine, again.

During his speech, Mr. Biden pledged that the United States would continue to supply weapons and equipment to Ukrainian forces, while accepting Ukrainian refugees and supporting them once they arrive in the U.S. His message to the Ukrainian people was short and clear: "We stand with you, period."

Mr. Biden said "this war has already been a strategic failure for Russia" because of the Ukrainian people's resolve for democracy and freedom, and the democracies of the world remaining united.

"The gravity of the threat is why the response from the West has been so swift, so

as the U.S. and its allies



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remain united. "We must commit now to be in this fight for the long haul," he said.

Earlier Saturday, Mr. Biden met with Polish President Andrzej Sebastian Duda. He thanked the Polish president for accepting Ukrainian refugees, and pledged to continue to support humanitarian efforts. The two also discussed their coordinated defense

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crisis firsthand made him think of Russian President Vladimir Putin as "a butcher."

He also called the Ukrainian people "amazing."

In response to Mr. Biden's "butcher" comment, Leonid Slutsky, the head of the international committee of the State Duma, wrote on his Telegram channel that the president's rhetoric is "unacceptable for a world leader." Russian State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said on his channel that U.S. citizens should be ashamed of their president.

Saturday is the final day of the president's whirlwind trip to Belgium and Poland, which began with meetings of the G7 and NATO. In Brussels, NATO leaders agreed to add four battle groups along the Eastern Flank, and Mr. Biden announced an additional \$1 billion in military aid to Ukraine. The U.S. is also accepting up to 100,000 Ukrainian refugees.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced Saturday that the U.S. would send an additional \$100 million to Ukraine for "civilian security assistance." This includes "personal protection equipment, field gear, tactical equipment, medical supplies, armored vehicles, and communication equipment for the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service and the National Police of Ukraine," according to Blinken's statement.

On Friday, Mr. Biden visited troops in the 82nd Airborne Division based in Poland, not far from the Ukrainian border, recognizing them for stepping up and volunteering to serve the country and the world. The president told the troops that their mission was

between democracies

avail ... and the values  
what's at stake."



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